DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 352 356 SP 034 232

AUTHOR Hammer, Charles H.; Rohr, Carol L.
TITLE Teacher Attrition and Migration. Issue Brief.
INSTITUTION National Center for Education Statistics (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO NCES-IB-2-92
PUB DATE Nov 92
NOTE 4p.
PUB TYPE Statistical Data (110)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Change; Comparative Analysis; Elementary Secondary Education; *Employment Patterns; *Faculty Mobility; *Labor Turnover; *Migration Patterns; Private Schools; Public Schools; Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Behavior; *Teacher Employment; Teacher Employment Benefits; Teacher Salaries; Teacher Transfer; Teaching (Occupation)

ABSTRACT

This issue brief addresses the following questions: (1) How many teachers leave the profession in a year's time, and why? and (2) Are public school teachers more or less likely than private school teachers to leave the profession or move to different schools? Data were gathered from the National Center for Education Statistics 1987-88 Schools and Staffing Survey and the 1988-89 Teacher Followup Survey. Results suggest: (1) private schools regularly have to replace a larger percentage of their teacher work force than do public schools; (2) the combination of attrition and migration means an even larger proportional loss of teachers for the private sector in comparison with the public sector; (3) some reasons given for leaving the profession include better pay, other career opportunities, dissatisfaction with teaching as a career, family or personal move, health, pregnancy, or retirement; (4) teachers move to other schools for reasons such as reduction-in-force, lay-off, school closing, school reorganization, and reassignment; and (5) better salary and benefits offered in the public sector attract numerous private school teachers. For further information, three U.S. Department of Education reports are listed. (LL)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED352356

# TEACHER ATTRITION AND MIGRATION

## ISSUE BRIEF

November 1992

National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SP034232



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ISSUE BRIEF

# Teacher Attrition and Migration

NOVEMBER 1992
IB-2-92

**Figure 1.—Percentages of teachers in the 1987-88 school year who left teaching in a year's time**

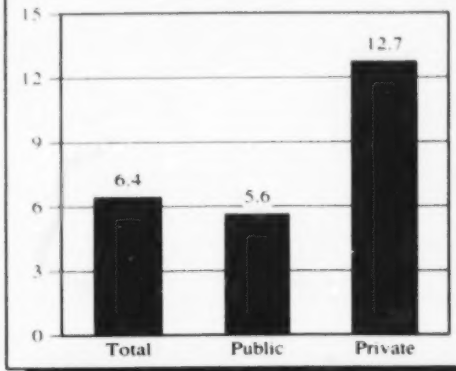
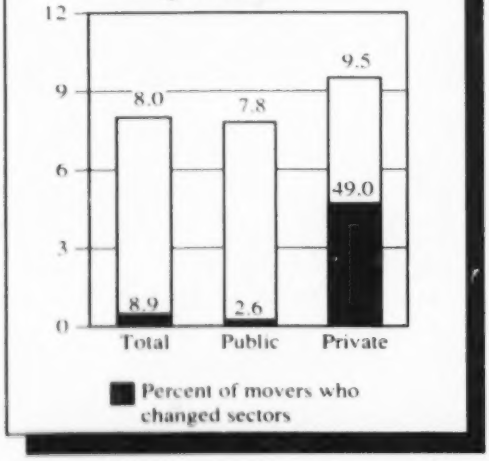



**Figure 2.—Percentages of teachers in the 1987-88 school year who moved to other schools in a year's time, with percentages of movers who changed sectors**




How many teachers leave the profession in a year's time? And why? Are public school teachers more or less likely than private school teachers to leave the profession or move to different schools?

These questions and others about teachers in the 1987-88 school year who left the profession (attrition) or moved to other schools (migration) in a year's time can be addressed by data from NCES's 1987-88 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and 1988-89 Teacher Followup Survey (TFS).

### What percentage of the nation's 1987-88 teachers left the profession in a year's time? Are public or private school teachers more likely to leave teaching?

About 5.6 percent of the approximately 2,323,200 public school teachers in the 1987-88 school year had left teaching by the following year (Figure 1). This percentage is close to NCES official projections of around 6 percent for previous years. In the same school year 12.7 percent of the 307,131 private school teachers had left teaching by the following year. If this difference between public and private school teacher attrition rates were fairly constant over the years, it would mean that private schools regularly have to replace a larger percentage of their teacher work force than do public schools.

### What percentage of the nation's 1987-88 teachers moved to other schools in a year's time? Are public or private school teachers more likely to change schools?

While teachers who move to other schools do not represent a loss to the profession, they do represent a loss to the schools from which they move, and replacements must be recruited and hired. The SASS and TFS data provide the first national look at the rate at which teachers move to other schools.

About 8.0 percent of all teachers in the 1987-88 school year had moved to other schools by the following year (Figure 2). The percentage of these "movers" was similar for public and private schools. Approximately 7.8 percent of public and 9.5 percent of private school teachers moved to other schools. However, nearly half of the private school "movers" left the private sector to teach in public schools, while less than 3 percent of the public school "movers" left the public sector to teach in private schools. The combination of attrition and migration means an even larger proportional loss of teachers for the private sector in comparison with the public sector.

SOURCE: All data in this *Issue Brief* are from *Schools and Staffing in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1987-88*. National Center for Education Statistics, NCES 92-120.

LB34.232

**Table 1.—Reasons why former teachers left teaching: 1988-89**

| Main reason | Percentage of former teachers who picked each reason: Public in 1987-88 | Private in 1987-88 |
|---|---|---|
| For better salary or benefits | 4.5 | 9.2 |
| To pursue another career outside of education | 14.8 | 12.5 |
| Dissatisfied with teaching as a career | 8.9 | 6.7 |
| Family or personal move, or health, or pregnancy/childrearing | 34.7 | 47.3 |
| To retire | 22.5 | 5.5 |
| Other or not reported | 14.6 | 18.8 |

**Table 2.—Reasons why teachers changed schools: 1988-89**

| Main reason | Percentage of teachers who picked each reason: Public in 1987-88 | Private in 1987-88 |
|---|---|---|
| School staffing action | 32.1 | 17.7 |
| Family or personal move | 31.6 | 25.3 |
| For better salary or benefits | 5.8 | 30.0* |
| For a better teaching assignment | 18.3 | 15.5 |
| Dissatisfied with the previous school | 12.3 | 11.5 |

Details may not add to 100 percent due to rounding error.

*81.8 percent of these teachers changed to public schools.

## Why do teachers leave teaching?

Popular belief is that many who leave teaching do so for better pay or other career opportunities. About 19 percent of public and 22 percent of private school teachers who left the profession picked these as their main reasons for leaving (Table 1). Another 8.9 percent of public and 6.7 percent of private school teachers who left were dissatisfied with teaching as a career.

However, substantial percentages of teachers who left teaching gave reasons that appeared to be unrelated to teaching issues. Approximately 35 percent of public and 47 percent of private school teachers gave "Family or personal move, or health, or pregnancy/childrearing" as their main reason for leaving the teaching profession. About 23 percent of public and 6 percent of private school teachers gave "To retire" as their main reason.

## Why do teachers change schools?

Teachers moved to other schools for school- and nonschool-related reasons. Approximately 32 percent of public and 18 percent of private school teachers moved to other schools because of a "School staffing action", such as reduction-in-force, lay-off, school closing, school reorganization, or reassignment (Table 2). Another 32 percent of public and 25 percent of private school teachers changed schools for a nonschool-related reason, "Family or personal move". The remaining 36 percent of public and 57 percent of private school teachers moved for other school-related reasons.

The better salary and benefits offered in the public sector attracted numerous private school teachers. Most (about 82 percent) of the private school teachers who moved to other schools "For better salary or benefits" moved to the public sector.

## For more information, see the following reports:


U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Characteristics of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers: Results from the Teacher Followup Survey, 1988-89* (NCES 91–128), by S.A. Bobbit, E. Faupel, and S. Burns. Washington, D.C.: 1991.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *Schools and Staffing in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1987-88* (NCES 92–120), by S.P. Choy, E.A. Medrich, R.R. Henke, and S.A. Bobbit. Washington, D.C.: 1992.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. *1988 Schools and Staffing Survey Sample Design and Estimation* (NCES 91–127), by S. Kaufman. Washington, D.C.: 1991.


*Issue Briefs* present information on education topics of current interest. All estimates shown are based on samples and are subject to sampling variability. All differences reported are statistically significant at the .05 level. In the design, conduct, and data processing of NCES surveys, efforts are made to minimize the effects of nonsampling errors, such as item nonresponse, measurement error, data processing error, or other systematic error.


This *Issue Brief* was prepared by Charles H. Hammer, NCES, and Carol L. Rohr, Pinkerton Computer Consultants, Inc. For further information on the surveys, contact Charles H. Hammer, (202) 219-1330. To receive a copy of this *Issue Brief*, call 1-800-424-1616.



NCES 92–148